

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY NICOSIA
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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINS, CY

SUBJECT: ASSASSINATION OF U.S. AMBASSADOR RODGER DAVIES--
PRESS REPORTS.

1. WASHINGTON POST PAGE 4 CARRIES FRONT PAGE STORY HEAD-
LINE "CYPRUS TO ARREST, TRY 6 RIGHTISTS IN '74 DEATH OF
U.S. AMBASSADOR." DATELINE NICOSIA UNDER JOSEPH FITCHETT
BYLINE, LEAD PARAGRAPH STATES GOC HAS DECIDED TO ARREST
AND TRY SIX GREEK CYPRIOT RIGHT-WING EXTREMISTS WHO ALLEG-
EDLY INVOLVED IN DAVIES ASSASSINATION. INFORMATION ATTRI-
BUTED TO "HIGH CYPRIOT GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS." THRUST
OF LENGTHY ARTICLE IS THAT PROSECUTION WAS LARGELY A POLI-
TICAL DECISION("A SIGN OF MAKARIOS' EFFORT TO IMPROVE GOC
IMAGE WITH CARTER ADMINISTRATION,")AND CAME ABOUT ONLY AFTER
SUSTAINED PRESSURE FROM USG. ARTICLE HIGHLIGHTS THE
FACT THAT ALL SIX ARRESTED ARE EOKA-B MEMBERS.

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2. ARTICLE STATES "THREE DEFENDANTS WHO POLICE SAY WERE
IDENTIFIED FIRING AUTOMATIC WEAPONS INTO DAVIES OFFICE
ARE TO BE CHARGED WITH MANSLAUGHTER," WITH A MAXIMUM PENALTY
LIFE IN PRISON. THE OTHER THREE TO BE CHARGED WITH ILLE-
GAL USE OF FIRE ARMS, MAXIMUM 15 YEARS.

3. ARTICLE ALSO NOTED "U.S. OFFICERS WERE INVITED TO FOLLOW-UP FIRSTHAND WITH CYPRIOT DETECTIVE WORK." WHEN INVESTIGATION WAS RE-OPENED LAST YEAR TELEVISION NEWSFILMS WAS ENLARGED AND SCRUTINIZED FOR LEADS.

4. OTHER REPORTS, INCLUDING REUTER'S NICOSIA INDICATED THE THREE DEFENDANTS WILL BE CHARGED WITH HOMOCIDE.

5. THE FOLLOWING PRESS GUIDANCE WAS PREPARED FOR CONTINGENCY USE BY DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN FEB. 4.

6. Q: THERE IS A REPORT IN THE PRESS THAT THE CYPRUS GOVERNMENT HAS DECIDED TO ARREST INDIVIDUALS ALLEGEDLY INVOLVED IN THE ASSASSINATION OF U.S. AMBASSADOR RODGER DAVIES. CAN YOU TELL US ANY THING ABOUT THAT?

A: AN INVESTGATION BY THE CYPRUS GOVERNMENT SEEKING THOSE REPOSNSIBLE FOR THE DEATH OF AMBASSADOR DAVIES HAS BEEN UNDERWAY SINCE THAT TRAGIC EVENT. WE HAVE REMAINED IN CLOSE CONTACT WITH THE CYPRUS GOVERNMENT REGARDING THIS EFFORT AND WOULD WELCOME ITS CONCLUSION WITH THE ARREST AND CONVICTION OF THOSE INVOLVED IN HIS ASSASSINATION. WE HAVE CONSISTENTLY URGED THE CYPRUS GOVERNMENT TO COMPLETE ITS INVESTIGATION AND TO BRING THE PERPETRATORS OF THE CRIME TO JUSTICE.

7. Q: HAVE YOU BEEN INFORMED OFFICIALLY THAT ARRESTS ARE IMMINENT?

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A: NO BUT WE HAVE BEEN AWARE OF THE PROGRESS OF THE INVESTIGATION. THE DECISION TO ARREST INDIVIDUALS ALLEGEDLY INVOLVED IN THE ASSASSINATION IS ONE TO BE MADE BY THE CYPRUS GOVERNMENT.

8. Q: THE REPORTS SAY THE LONG-DELAYED PROSECUTION IS LARGELY A POLITICAL DECISION TO IMPROVE THE IMAGE OF PRESIDENT MAKARIOS' GOVERNMENT. DO YOU VIEW IT IN THIS LIGHT?

A: I WOULD SIMPLY SAY THAT WE HAVE CONSISTENTLY URGED THE CYPRUS GOVERNMENT TO CONCLUDE ITS INVESTIGATION AND TO BRING TO JUSTICE THOSE REPOSNSIBLE FOR THE AMBAS-SADOR'S DEATH.

9. Q: ARE YOU SATISFIED WITH THE SPEED WITH WHICH THIS MATTER HAS BEEN BROUGHT TO A CONCLUSION?

A: IT IS NOT FOR US TO MAKE JUDGEMENT ABOUT THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE PROCESSES OF ANOTHER COUNTRY. HOWEVER, OUR BASIC INTEREST HAS BEEN TO SEE THAT JUSTICE IS DONE AND WE ARE PLEASED THAT THE INVESTIGATION APPEARS NOW TO BE COMING TO A CONCLUSION.

10. Q: CAN YOU TELL US WHETHER YOU HAVE COOPERATED IN THE INVESTIGATION?

A: I DON'T WANT TO GET INTO THAT. AS I HAVE SAID WE HAVE REMAINED IN CLOSE CONTACT WITH THE CYPRUS GOVERNMENT THROUGHOUT THE INVESTIGATION. OBVIOUSLY WE HAVE BEEN INTERESTED IN SEEING THAT JUSTICE IS DONE AND WE HAVE BEEN DOING WHAT WE COULD TO ASSIST THE CYPRUS GOVERNMENT IN THAT EFFORT.

11. AT NOON PRESS BRIEFING FEBRUARY 4, QUESTIONS REGARDING DAVIES CASE WERE RAISED; DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN USED LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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GUIDANCE IN PARAGRAPHS 6 AND 10, ABOVE.
VANCE

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NNN

*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a

*** Current Classification *** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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